Higher Education Information Technology Committee (HEITC)

August 22, 2001
Approved Meeting Minutes

Committee Members and Guests:
Bow, Randy
Brady, Christine – not present
Budd, Gavin – not present
Burton, DeVere
Farnsworth, Bill, ITRMC
Green, Cliff
Johnson, Gens
Joslin, Ann – Chair
Kiesz, Kelly
Krun, Lynda – Secretary
Lay, Terry
Liroff, David – Guest
Lyons, Tom – not present
O'Neill, Dave
Pischanesci, Rob, IPTV
Silvers, Carol, Idaho State Library
Szofran, Nancy
Taylor, David
Wilde, Glenn

Meeting began 9:15 AM. Ann Joslin reviewed the agenda, and there were no additions or changes.

Motion #1: DeVere moved to accept minutes as written, seconded by Cliff Green. Vote taken and passed.

Nancy Szofran: General Manning will address the Higher Education Information Technology Committee (HEITC) and speak on finances and technology later today.

Dr. Fitch presented the DFM's B-8.1 form on the behalf of HEITC to the State Board of Education at their August meeting. He asked for their support on the $1.75 Million enhancement request, connecting to the state's backbone IDANET (Idaho Network). The board approved the request, and it will be presented to the Joint Finance Appropriations Committee (JFAC). The $1.75 Million has been split in half between capital outlay and operating expenses, since the allocation formula has not been created and percentages could not be used.

HEITC needs to formulate an allocation formula and present recommendations to the ICTL at the September 25, 2001 meeting, which will be forwarded to the State Board of Education. The first year will be connecting the institutions to the backbone. The unique needs of each institution will be taken into consideration, as each institution prepares to take advantage of the broadband capabilities afforded by the state's network.

The new senator appointed to the Idaho Council for Technology in Learning (ICTL) is Senator Lynn Whitworth. Newly appointed Representatives to the ICTL are General Manning and Bert Marley. An updated ICTL listing will be sent to HEITC electronically. Mr. Meyerhoeffer has resigned as a member of the ICTL. A letter will be written to the State Board of Education on Meyerhoeffer's replacement.

The IDANET oversight committee had a preliminary meeting for direction and planning purposes. There is a need for quick implementation and quick success connecting the state to the network (backbone). It was suggested that promotional and marketing information be designed. Funding the Infrastructure – a report on the Institute for Higher Education Policy has been produced. It is a guide to financing technology infrastructure for higher education. This report and the URL will be e-mailed to HEITC members.

Infrastructure, Professional Development, Access document was reviewed.

The committee worked on the strategic plan. They reviewed goals, objectives. Evaluation process and performance measures will be discussed at the next meeting.

Cliff Green will edit Goal #6 action items. Dave O'Neill will draft Goal #7 from some actions items discussed. Drafts will be sent to Lynda Krun for distribution. Each member will send in his or her suggestions, corrections, and or additions to Lynda Krun, which will be compiled and sent back to each member.

The next HEITC meeting will be on September 7, 2001, 9-3:30, at the IEA (Idaho Education Association) building, 620 North 6th, Basement Conference Room, Boise, ID. Meeting adjourned 3:40 PM.

The following is Dr. David Liroff from WGBH, presentation on Digital Asset Management.

Dr. David Liroff, WGBH – **Digital Asset Management**

There must be some agreed upon conventions when setting up the state's backbone, or any backbone for that matter. At this early stage of the game, there in an opportunity to set as one of the objectives, a way in which the participating organizations will cooperate with each other from the beginning and define how content is described, otherwise you will have mass confusion. Unless we figure this all out before we implement these systems, it would be very difficult to take them apart after the fact.

The direction in which Digital Asset Management is heading depicts changes in, for instance: technology, how people are accessing information, and the roles of formerly separate and distinct media and institutions. I find these issues extraordinarily challenging. Three months from now, these will be the old days technology-speaking, because the rate of change is such that the average time between decisions is longer than the average time between surprises. You make a decision, and then you say, "Oh my, the rules have changed again."

WGBH has in its archives over 50 years of audio and video materials, over 300,000 videotapes that have some direct and extraordinary value. If you have ever worked with the media, videotapes are like buying tomatoes; it starts to deteriorate as soon as you bring them home. Some of these tapes are good and have content on them that are priceless and valuable.

Digital Asset Management, also known as Media Asset Management, has become ubiquitous in the library and media world. At this years National Association of Broadcaster's Convention in Las Vegas, every other vendor was selling "the" asset management solution, and it was "the" hot product. The increase in the number of deliverable media, storage capacity, bandwidth, and processing power now takes all the conversations that have been going on in a relatively static print oriented library world and moves it into the rich media world. (Rich media is a buzz phrase for audio, video, multi media, and web content.) This really wasn't practical to talk about before, because there were no storage or processing capabilities able to work effectively with file sizes that we are looking at now. While we are not there yet and despite what the vendors say, you look at the curves of where the storage is going with bandwidth and processing power, and in 2-4 years we will be dealing with audio, video, and media files like the ASCII files we have been dealing with in the past.

We not only have the Internet, DVD, CD ROMs, direct broadcast satellite, and cable, you must keep an eye on video games, because they have processing power, storage capability, and Internet access built in to them. The average age of video game players is 28 years old. One can plug any Play Station II in to the Internet and be playing games with 30,000 kids or 28 years old around the world. This is a very intriguing and subversive way into the question of the Digital Divide. We tend to think that Digital Divide is desktop PC and storage. There will be those kids who have Microsoft Exbots or Play Station II who will be far more equipped that we ever imagined, because we bring in our own concept of what that involves.

Very straight-forward terms, if you categorize as assets all the editorial materials that flow throughout organizations, such as: documents, web sites, television programs, distance learning

courses, on-line curriculum materials, objects in the collection of the Historical Society and all the administrative documentation that goes with it, rights of ownership information, contents in which they were created, categorize these as assets of the organizations, then digital asset management is the system to organize that information. When you look at what the strategic objective of the digital asset management is, it's to optimize the use of this content to achieve the missions of our organizations.

To try to begin to work on why it is worth investing in these technologies as we create the business models, we have to come up with some metric, which places a value on making content available for those who can make best use of it for education.

One of the major challenges and opportunities is when a producer interviews a major figure in public life, and there is one-hour interview with that person from which three minutes is used in the final broadcast program. In fact, those field original materials have far greater value than do the finished programs. When people twenty years from now are looking for the original one-hour long interview, it is far more valuable than the few sound bites that are in the final documentary. The challenge then is how do we begin to label, catalogue, and preserve these materials, and provide access to it. Again, what justifies the enormous investment that we have to make in this process? Web sites are in the same category. How do you get your arms around a web site, particularly those that involve dynamic values or dynamic links, and preserve the elements, production notes, and technical issues, which are far more complex with broadcasting audio?

It is easier for me to take a long-term view of these issues, because WGBH traces its history back to the 1830s. We started with public lectures for the citizens of Boston. There is an absolutely unbroken lineal connection between those public lectures in the 1830s and where WGBH is today. What we are finding out as public broadcasters all over the country, this 50-year involvement in broadcast distribution has labeled the organization as being a broadcaster. The technologies we are using and the education opportunities that we represent are far broader than that topic. I wonder in 50 years what they will think of the job we are doing now. One of the dilemmas we all face is the rate of change that is accelerating exponentially. It is so difficult to keep up with changes that are ongoing. It is difficult to get a fix on the inter-connection system in 2006, and that's a lifetime in terms of what kind of Internet infrastructure that we are going to want to be in support of.

I recommend you read, "The Art of the Long View" by Peter Schwartz. Scenario planning encourages the participants to imagine what the future may be like at some point down the line, and you can set the horizon wherever you want. The discipline requires participants to identify what the principle drivers may be in determining how the future evolves. The scenarios can be enormously instructive and takes the intensity of the need to be right, because it encourages people to advance alternative scenarios and doesn't require anyone to be any righter than anyone else. Peter Schwartz said, "This is not rocket science, and I should know because I am a rocket scientist."

I also recommend Andy Groves, Chairman of Intel's book: "Only the Paranoid Survive." His concept of strategic inflexion point, which is upon all of us these days, is the point in the life cycle of an organization where fewer and fewer of the old rules apply, and nobody as yet has written the new rules. You are caught in this space where you know if you continue to play by the old rules, you know you are going to crash, and you have to try to intuit what the best course will be moving forward. The dilemma is what we all face, we all carry a great amount of baggage from the past that creates an enormous momentum to continue to do things the way we have been doing them.

If we could start over, how would we approach the questions of organizing our editorial assets, going forward, and then dealing separately with what we do retroactively? There was a day when we filled the dumpsters and threw out all the video films. At that time, film of the news was considered worthless. Now 25 years later, there is an all out effort to go all over the country to television studios, and try to collect what ever news remnants that still exist. We are doing this because the whole history of the last 25 years has disappeared or is on videotapes that are perishable unless are transferred over.

There are some things that we know are going to impact the nature of the discussion about digital asset management. What appears to me, despite the .com and economic slump of last year, the underlying technologies are moving forward at a very rapid pace. Processing power continues to increase; storage costs, amount of dark fiber around the country, and under utilized satellite transponders continues to increase making the prices plummet down. The capacity of an individual fiber is to carry many times more bits of information than five years ago, because of using different colored wave lengths on the fiber, so that even with the existing fiber in place, that capacity is going to increase. By 2008, a $1200 desktop PC may have a 4-tera byte hard disc, capable of 75,000 hours of music or 20,000 hours of video. Individual users are going to have enormous storage capacity, have content to which they can manipulate at their own convenience, and produce materials that they find most acceptable.

We are seeing increased consumer control, content use, when and what platform, peer to peer networking computing, moving content around from user to user with movies instead of the quick time frames that we are used to, video on demand, interactive media, wirelesses and mobile devices, and video programming for PDAs. In-home networking is very rapid, and the number of Internet subscribers will increase to 750 million. People are increasingly going to be connected to the Internet, not for computing in the way we have come to know it in recent years, but for all other kinds of connectiveness. Think of it, this will include virtually every appliance or electronic device in the house having some kind of interface with the net.

As people can access content, intellectual property with increasing flexibility in ways they can customize to their own needs, those of us who have repositories of intellectual property or content have enormous opportunities to more fully realize the financial or public services value. If we could only figure out how to organize, format, and deliver the content so that people will have access. We have the tendencies to think of the digital divide as those who are in rural areas who do not have access or high-speed connections. The other digital divide is between all our

analogue content and everybody who is out there with digital devices. The challenge is to bridge those divides.

We are working through the basic metadata scheme and cleaning our legacy files, which are file maker files with 600,000 entries. Now that we have defined the template, we are going back through and doing the mix and match, so that our legacy files conform to the new stuff coming in. The new productions are being required, every day at the end of the shoot, to log on to this user interface and log in what they shot that day. This data then tracks with a content as it goes through the course production process, but its not there yet. We are trying to get the corporation for public broadcasting to fund one of the big time consulting firms to come in and do the business model. We know intuitively that it makes sense to do some of the stuff, but retroactive work is the toughest to justify on an economic basis. We may end up tagging incoming new content and going back and only doing retroactive work when there is a clear source and need.

The present vendors will advocate their closed proprietary solutions, IBM being a case in point because it serves their interest to do so. The end users are developing sufficient scale and clout that we can begin to push back. We are hoping in the next coming months to develop some standards.